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SUBJECT: JULY 9 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: XINJIANG UNREST, RIO TINTO
ESPIONAGE CASE, CHINESE BUSINESSMEN ARRESTED IN RUSSIA

11. Key points at the July 9 MFA press briefing:

-- Regarding the events in Xinjiang, while current casualty figures were not available, no foreign casualties had been recorded.

-- Regarding Turkey's proposal to discuss the events in Xinjiang before the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the spokesperson noted that as this was an internal Chinese matter, there was no reason to seek UNSC discussion.

-- Regarding the recent arrest in Shanghai of four employees of Australian mining company Rio Tinto, the spokesperson noted that there was sufficient evidence that the accused - including Stern Hu, an Australian citizen - had stolen state secrets, gravely harming China's economic interests and national security.

-- The spokesperson downplayed speculation that the arrests were payback for the recent failed deal between Chinalco and Rio Tinto, emphasizing that this was an independent judicial matter and that politicizing the issue served no purpose and would be bad for Australia.

Xinjiang Unrest: Casualties, Turkey's Proposal

12. Regarding the violence in Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region, MFA Spokesperson Qin Gang noted at the July 9 regular MFA press briefing that no current figures were available for the number of total deaths, though he added that there had been no foreign casualties thus far. Regarding Turkey's proposal to discuss the events in Xinjiang before the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), the spokesperson noted that as this was an internal Chinese matter, there was no reason to seek UNSC discussion. The spokesperson added that the unrest in Xinjiang was driven by organized, violent forces and asked that the international community respect China's territorial sovereignty and national security and cooperate with China to counter the evil forces of extremism, separatism and terrorism rather than enforce double standards.

Xinjiang Unrest: No Comment on Kadeer and Tohti

13. The spokesperson was asked about comments he had made at the 7 July regular MFA press briefing, in which he claimed Chinese authorities possessed evidence that Rebiya Kadeer was responsible for the unrest in Xinjiang, urging the international community not to support her separatist activities. When asked if China would seek to work with the United States (where Kadeer resided) to pursue extradition or other legal action against Kadeer, the spokesperson offered no

comment. The spokesperson also provided no comment when asked about the reported recent arrest of Ilham Tohti, an ethnic-Uighur professor at the Central University for Nationalities in Beijing.

Rio Tinto Espionage Case: Confirmation

¶4. Regarding the recent arrest in Shanghai of four employees of Australian mining company Rio Tinto, the spokesperson noted that there was sufficient evidence that the accused - including Stern Hu, an Australian citizen - had stolen state secrets, gravely harming China's economic interests and national security. In response to questions of whether these arrests were payback for the recent failed deal between Chinalco and Rio Tinto, the spokesperson emphasized that this was an independent judicial matter and that politicizing the issue served no purpose and would be bad for Australia.

Rio Tinto Espionage Case: No Further Comment

¶5. The spokesperson did not respond to questions regarding when Hu would be granted access to Australian diplomats or to a lawyer. (Note: subsequent press reporting from 9 July indicated that Australian consular officials would be allowed to visit Hu the following day.) When asked whether the reported recent arrest of a Shougang steel company executive on charges of commercial espionage was related to the Rio arrests, the spokesperson offered no comment.

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Chinese Businessmen Detained in Russia

¶6. In response to a question about Chinese businessmen arrested in Russia, the spokesperson noted that China had not yet received official notification of the arrests from Russia, but that China would work to ensure the businessmen's interests were represented. The spokesperson added a reminder to all Chinese abroad to respect local laws.
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